

# Fade as Cultural Capital: A Case Study of Young Men's Culture in a Barbershop in Amsterdam

Komunitas: International Journal of  
Indonesian Society and Culture  
16 (2) (2024): 207-217  
DOI: 10.15294/komunitas.v16i2.7856  
© 2024 Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia  
p-ISSN 2086-5465 | e-ISSN 2460-7320  
Web: <https://journal.unnes.ac.id/journals/komunitas>

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## Abstract

Fade haircuts are one of the most popular looks these days. The haircut entails cutting the sides and the back of the head as short as possible and making it transition or "fade" into the longer hair on the head. This article looks at the shared culture of men in a barbershop in Amsterdam Nieuw-West through the theory of cultural capital by Bourdieu. This theory, used to analyze the upper-class French, can be implemented to analyze all kinds of groups and people. Manners, knowledge, behaviors, and skills that a person can tap into to demonstrate one's cultural competence and social status all come together in cultural capital. These beforenamed components are a necessity to be part of the urban middle-class culture.

## Keywords

Haircut, street culture, masculinity, cultural capital, barbershop, Amsterdam

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## INTRODUCTION

### The Fade

The fade entails cutting the sides and the back of the head as short as possible. Then gradually building the length using clippers, shears and blades to “fade” it in the longer hairs on top. Doing this in a way that makes the short sides flow seamlessly into the longer hairs. Fade haircuts are one of the most popular looks these days and it is especially important to the men who come to this barbershop. Besides the fade, a line up is fundamental for haircuts today. A line up consists of cutting along the natural hairline and lining it up with a straight-edge razor. This means lining up the temples, behind the ears, the beard and a clean boxy outline around the forehead.

As a barber, I have been around various cultures that differ in styles and opinions about fades. In many non-Western cultures, fades and line-ups are the go-to haircuts. These haircuts need maintenance to keep that fresh look as these haircuts grow out within a few weeks. Getting a fresh fade is great feeling for many men. As groomed individuals often leave good impression on others. Looking presentable makes a difference in confidence. After I take off the cape, they could float home. They feel like different men, having a spring in their step, talking more confidently. As the time goes and the fade fades, a bit of their confidence goes with it. That's why it is important to maintain this look.

There is a great cultural gap between people with and without fades. Fades are more commonly seen on members of the urban community, which is seldom/never the case in the bourgeois community. The urban community referring to most inhabitants of the region surrounding a city, places with higher density of people. This thus also refers to people from different descents and skin colors. As they live proportionately more in urban areas. A fade can be very symbolic and creates unity. This particular haircut brings certain cultures together: *physically*, by looking more alike and being in the same space, and in terms of *culture and togetherness*, it shows their cultural identity

and cultural capital, creating inclusion and exclusion.

A fade might come across as just a haircut however it has a whole world behind it. Fades are culture as well as a part of many cultures. All of these cultures have their own specific requirements to be met in terms of their haircut and/or fade.

The barbershop in this research is based in a multicultural neighborhood in Amsterdam Nieuw-West. The journey starts in front of a flat in Amsterdam Slotervaart, the clients walk through the door of the communal storage spaces which is opened for them. This leads to a hallway of doors, some cobwebs, bikes and yellow light. The last door to reach is numbered 54. We call this shed “the box” and it is a private barbershop. This type of barbershop is common in Dutch street culture. This particular one is filled with big mirrors, dark tones and no windows. Most of the time the space is filled with myself (the barber), the client and other clients or their friends who hang out and interact.

Now the question of how they interact. “The barbershop and hair salons are integral and specific cultural sites within the Black community.” (Alexander, 2003)

The barbershop has an own culture, of mannerisms, thoughts, language and knowledge. This paper will try to create a better understanding of this culture. To better understand this culture we will do so through the theory of cultural capital. Cultural capital is a theory that was developed by Pierre Bourdieu in 1980's to analyze the French upper-class. In their manners, knowledge, behaviors, and skills. People use these to demonstrate one's cultural competence and social status all come together in cultural capital. Although this theory was created for the elite, this theory will also help to understand these men.

The aim of this article is to analyse fade as a form of cultural capital. People who want to get around in this community, need to know the fade, ideally wear a fade, and also speak a particular language, and know the cultural codes of fade.

### Specifics of the fade

A lot of people feel that when the hair on the sides of their head grows too long, they need to visit the barber. Many men treat the hair on the sides of their head the same way men would treat their beard. Shaving the sides of their head with the same frequency as shaving their beards.

A big part of why I see many of these men so often is because the haircut they have needs maintenance. As it is common culture for these men to feel that long hair on the sides and back of the hair looks shabby. Most fade haircuts get touched up every 2-4 weeks. As the sides grow out and the lines of their outer edges dissolve, they come back to get it redone. Seldom do these men let their hair grow for more than 2 months.

Grooming and finances are often important factors in how people want to present themselves. Whilst both being integral parts of cultural capital. As embodied cultural capital and objectified cultural capital. The fade entails those men take/have/make the time to cut their hair. Which shows effort for grooming of their selves. Next to that it also shows their financial capability to be able to go to a proper barber. Timing of peoples fade reflects the holders' priorities. As people get their fade done just before they want to look at their best. There are three factors that play a role within the assessment of someone's fade: *form*, *execution*, and *frequency*. Form means the type of fade, execution means how well this fade is done, and frequency means the shortness of the sides and the maintenance level. To delve further into the subject, there are different fades that keep to different subcultures or even different types of people. As some fades better accompany different lifestyles. Some fades work better for the office, and some work better for an artist. This haircut needs maintenance as it is common culture for these men to feel that long hair on the sides and back of the hair look shabby. Having to know when a fade needs to be "freshened up" is a part of the cultural capital for this group. This habit in turn creates an in-crowd of people who regularly visit the barber. As light through a prism, that expands into

an array of colors, a fade can expand into a world of its own with the right eyes.

### METHODS

As a seasoned barber with 13 years of experience, and 22 years of experience being a regular customer I have cultivated an intimate understanding of the barbershop environment and the individuals who frequent it. In my barbershop a haircut typically lasts approximately 45 minutes, provides an ideal setting for casual and in-depth conversations. To minimize social desirability bias, I employed a mixed-method approach, combining unstructured initial interviews with subsequent semi-structured discussions. This approach fostered a comfortable and natural environment, encouraging participants to express their genuine thoughts and experiences.

Participant observation was the primary methodology for this research. Through prolonged engagement and immersion, I aimed to gain an 'insider perspective' (O'Reilly, 2012). Ethnography, often understood as 'telling it like it is from the inside' (Brewer, 2000), was central to this endeavor. My familiarity with the barbershop and its patrons allowed me to seamlessly integrate into the community, minimizing any discomfort or self-consciousness among participants.

To mitigate the potential biases associated with participant observation, I employed strategies such as reflexivity, triangulation, member checking, and adherence to ethical guidelines (Birt, 2016). By recording interviews, I could focus on the conversational exchange, potentially steering discussions in subsequent interviews. Immediate note-taking and diary entries complemented these recordings, facilitating a thorough analysis of the data.

The research for this paper was conducted from January to March 2021, encompassing 32 filmed interviews, 33 haircuts, and detailed fieldnotes. This comprehensive approach provided a rich dataset for exploring the experiences and perspectives of individuals within the barbershop community

### Values

Barbershops are a place that serve as places to talk, debate, learn and hang out as Trudier Harris (1979) eloquently explains "Barbershops in black literature also serve as public forums and information centers. They provide a setting for the discussion of political, social, and moral issues as well as the exchange of information" However the barbershop also has a culture of its own, and it requires certain knowledge, behaviors, and skills to be able to function in it.

### Respect and responsibility

Respect is paramount among these men, a value they uphold and expect from others. They demonstrate particular reverence for elders and women, often expressing empathy through phrases like, "I have a sister too" or "It could have been your father."

Hard work is another fundamental principle. While there's no specific hourly requirement or job description, effort is always acknowledged and rewarded with expressions of respect. Education is also highly valued. Regardless of the level of study, dedication to learning is appreciated. Even if it is in sports or going to the gym, people acknowledge the consistency. As long as people make an effort to be better it is always rewarded with an impressed pout of the lower lip or the literal word "respect".

Compassion plays a significant role in their lives. They prioritize getting along with others and caring for their loved ones. Being a responsible father, a supportive son, and a pillar for both younger and older generations, (in order of importance for them) financially, physically and emotionally are all hallmarks of their character.

These men are driven by the desire to build a stable future. Often differing paths but the same goals, building a stable home which includes: the right income, a spouse, kids. This is probably be the highest goal in their long-term plan.

While their culture once emphasized material wealth, there's a growing shift towards a more mindful approach to life. Many are focusing on finding meaningful work, pursuing passions, and prioritizing

freedom over material possessions.

### Cultural Norms

Within this community, adherence to certain cultural norms and ideals plays a significant role in establishing social status and respect. Physical attributes, such as a muscular physique, and interpersonal skills, such as the ability to charm women, are often valued and recognized as markers of masculinity.

Gift-giving, a culturally specific act with varying meanings across societies (Mauss, 2000), is another important aspect of social interaction. These men share common understandings of appropriate spending, tipping, and gift selection, particularly for romantic partners.

The concept of "toughness" holds a particular significance within this group. It is often associated with courage, independence, and the ability to endure hardship. Through frequent interactions and shared experiences, these men develop and refine their collective values, standards, and behaviors. "The grooming extended beyond personal appearance. It also involved teaching young men respect, manners, and learning to show deference." (Shabazz, 2016)

Social codes and etiquette are essential for navigating social situations (Goffman, 1959). Understanding when to join a conversation, avoiding excessive self-promotion, and engaging with strangers appropriately are all examples of these unspoken rules. Joking, while seemingly effortless, requires cultural sensitivity and a careful awareness of potential social boundaries.

### Cultural capital

Cultural capital by Bourdieu (1986) is the accumulation of knowledge, behaviors, and skills that a person can tap into to demonstrate one's cultural competence and social status. People have a certain perception of the world, dress a certain way, and behave in a certain manner, this can be referred to as cultural capital. Cultural capital is seen as a capital as it grants access to groups. It is an asset that can even contribute to building wealth. Say you are not able to speak,

dress or walk posh, you will not be able to get into certain cliques. Nothing different from when you were young and saw the different groups emerging in your high school. The geeks, the jocks, the cool kids, the pot-heads. Although it might not have seen like much: The same with urban culture. Say the culture of academia also has expectations, although it might not per se be the dress or the walk, but have a heavy emphasis on the talk: are you not familiar with certain terms can make it hard to be part of "the group". This has been true for many groups. As middle class, to a more specific group say urban, to an even more specific group say skaters or creatives. It can go on endlessly, especially as many groups have overlap.

Cultural capital is a theory that was developed to analyze the French upper-class and their behavior. This theory however can be implemented to analyze all kinds of groups and people. To be part of these groups some of these manners become requirements. Within these groups there is also a certain pecking order, as most groups have layers with some having more or less prestige. This is often determined by their understanding of cultural capital is.

Cultural capital can be split up into three categories, *objectified cultural capital*, *institutionalized cultural capital*, and *embodied cultural capital*. Objectified cultural capital comprises all the property one owns, which can range from books to artworks, to games, to instruments, to cars and homes. Institutionalized cultural capital refers to academic credentials, professional qualifications, and foremost, one's job. Embodied cultural capital, refers to manners, knowledge, accents, behavior, dress, tastes, and posture.

Embodied cultural capital is acquired over time through socialization. By learning to be part of a certain culture you gain the manners of this culture because you mimic them to fit in. It is learned to us through family or subcultures we interact with.

Other examples of cultural capital are dining manners, use of language and body composition. Even sports one plays or watches or exercises one does can come from a

place of class and culture (Warde, 2006).

Being part of the same class and culture allows for less strenuous intercourse. Sharing all these different forms of cultural capital makes it easier for people to communicate with each other.

### Culture of fades

The fade helps to distinguish between population groups. The fade is a visible part of fashion, even at a distance, you can recognize someone who does and does not have a fade.

The fade is a haircut that is much more part of the culture of certain population groups. Take urban culture meaning Urban culture is the culture of towns and cities. The defining theme is the presence of a great number of very different people. The big cities like Amsterdam or Rotterdam, are the places where many urban subcultures came from. As street culture or creatives. Urban subcultures are often made by the people who live there and go outside.

The fade used to be "the" well maintained look for the black man. As their normal long hair would be an afro which was frowned upon in the "white" workplace/schools for a very long time.

Think about children of immigrants, as Moroccans, Turkish, Surinamese, African & Polish. For who the norm is to go to the barbershop and take as much as possible off the sides to "look maintained". The fade creates a direct visual of the in-crowd and the people who aren't part of it.

This look is not built on a skin color, more importantly it is built on culture. As white men who sport the look are often more deeply entrenched in urban culture. Whether that is the music, the fashion, the shows or the language. You can see that almost perfectly by the haircut.

Even coming into a barbershop expects a great deal of cultural knowledge. For example, the proper way to greet someone in the barbershop can be a gentle nod, whilst not smiling, a "hey, man" or fistbump and a "How are you". If you are even a second off in this interaction it can be noticed.

Some shops and barbershops have a

quiet atmosphere, some are extremely busy and crowded, some have happy people who keep yelling and laughing, some have deep talks about the world and humans and some have all of these.

You also have to understand how to understand and communicate with your barber to get the result you want as well as to be part of the crowd. To understand the language and/or lingo could aid in being more part of the situation.

As a conversation can easily be:

Barber "Hey man, what are we going to do?"

Client "I want to get a fade" (or the occasional "whatever you think works")

Depending on the barber and the client this could be the end of the instructions. But in my shop and many others the next question arises:

Barber "What kind of fade, high, low, mid?"

Client "mid, keep it a bit dark on the sides"

Barber "What do you want on top, 2, 4, 6 or a bit of the top?"

Client "6 on top, can you also line up my beard, as high as possible, a bit of a natural look keep the length. "

These numbers refer to the sizes of the guards which are on the clippers. You can see here, that when you don't understand the lingo you could have a blunder.

Because these men come in frequently enough, they learn and understand the language, as you only could by being a recurring visitor.

Cultural capital is a great way of expanding on the cultural and class differences a fade can showcase. Fades are part of a certain culture, thus having/getting a fade shows that you are part of that culture. To get more specific, the type of fade and quality of the fade can make indications of subcultures and class within that subculture. To see these differences, you have to speak "fade" fluently. Meaning you have to have the knowledge of a good fade as well as the right relationship of the fade with a subculture. The culture of fades is inclusive and accessible.

Fades are a way to express one's self. Setting one apart but also making them a part of something, just like fashion, clothing,

and make-up. From a cultural perspective a fade signifies joining a certain culture but also distancing oneself from another. It can be seen as a gateway to a group. Creating togetherness, a person one might identify with, a person they would look like.

A fade is part of the embodied cultural capital as well as it is style, and habit, as you have to habitually see the barber & the barbershop. While a fade is also objectified cultural capital as it is something one had to "buy" and keep "buying" as a sort of subscription or membership. While a haircut is both objectified and embodies cultural capital.

A fade haircut made its way into popular culture, however still is separated from the main crowd. A fade used to be an edgy haircut, for an edgy crowd. However, it is becoming a more accepted and laid-back look. The look also comes with a lifestyle of regularly going to the barber, making it into a monthly, bi-weekly or even weekly routine.

Because a fade has to be touched up so often it also gives a neat appearance. Having your haircut "on point".

### The Global Fade and its Local Adoption

Within the bustling barbershops of Indonesia, the rhythmic hum of clippers transcends mere hair shaping; it sculpts social currency.

"While travelling in Indonesia, in Lombok in particular, I was looking for a place to get my hair cut, to do so I have two approaches to find a good barbershop. One is: to google barbershops, and check their Instagram accounts and the second approach, that look for people with great fades and asking them. Luckily fades transcend borders, becoming increasingly common even in remote Indonesian towns. that was also true in most parts of Indonesia that I travelled. The bigger the city and the more tourism it had the more people had fades it seemed. A security guard flawlessly executed fade caught my eye. So I asked him where he had done it, and what the name of the barber was. Even though a lot of barbers share the same shop, some barbers are better (at fading). The guard led me to "Sweet

Java Barbershop Karang Bedil". An open studio with 8 barber chairs and 7 of them filled, with barbers and clients.

Greeted friendly and professionally, when I asked for one barber in particular, Ridwan, they became boys again, they found so special they teased that Ridwan for a bit. Saying "special request for RIDWAN" as they laughed. As a fellow barber I reveled in the atmosphere. I saw them focusing on their craft, and sometimes interacting with one another about the haircuts they did. It looked and felt just like any other barbershop I have seen. The difference was the language and the skin color. Next to that, they did the same thing all barbers do. The culture of barbershops seems to be one that transcends continents. Although, what would you think was going to happen if you put a bunch of young creative men with other men together in a room for so many hours and so many months.

Once I was in the chair I talked through pictured and he understood what I wanted, and he went to work. While busy I talked to him about how often he works and how many years he had worked. As the barber worked, we discussed his work schedule and experience. Revealing my own profession, I was met with a wave of curiosity, questions, and laughter. They asked about the haircuts they were doing, and I complimented them, also because they were very good at their trade. Also my haircut ended up looking perfect, I would not have done a better job. As I sat there I felt at ease and as I left I felt brand new. They did exactly what I wanted from a barbershop."

The global popularity of fade haircuts exemplifies this phenomenon. Initially symbolizing defiance and individuality, fades transcended geographical boundaries to become a worldwide trend. In Indonesia, particularly in tourist-heavy areas like Bali and Java, the adoption of fades is notable. This raises intriguing questions:

**Cultural Shift vs. Global Adaptation:**  
**Does the fade preference signify a move towards Westernized aesthetics**

Adopting fades becomes a visual representation of engaging with and expressing cultural capital. It's about adapting one's appearance to navigate a globalized and interconnected world. This intersection of fashion, belonging, and identity paints a vibrant picture of personal grooming choices in Indonesia. This experience of being in the barbershop ignited a deeper inquiry. Fades in Indonesia transcended mere imitation. They were expressions of self-expression within a global context. adaptations, the lively discussions, the shared passion – all demonstrated the complex interplay between global and local influences. Individuals weren't simply adopting trends; they were actively shaping them, weaving their unique identities into the fabric of this global phenomenon. Fades weren't just a haircut trend I observed globally; they resonated with me personally. In Indonesia, I saw them worn with pride, adapted to local styles, and woven into the very fabric of identity. My quest for a haircut wasn't just about aesthetics; it was about understanding the culture. Understanding fades in Indonesia requires moving beyond simplistic narratives. It is interaction and adaptation. Fades are cultural currency, it is a vibrant tapestry woven with threads of identity, belonging, and individual agency. It's a reminder that cultural exchange isn't a one-way street; it is dynamic where individuals actively participate in shaping their cultural identity.

In "Sweet Java Barbershop" the Barbers meticulously crafted fades, they were focused while sharing laughter. This wasn't just a barbershop; it was a cultural hub, a vibrant echo of the barbershops worldwide, yet distinctly Indonesian. They adapt the fade to suit local preferences, a touch softer at the edges, more volume on top. A testament to cultural hybridization in action. The fade, initially a global trend, was being reinterpreted through local aesthetics, creating something more Indonesian.

But it wasn't just the styles; it was the atmosphere. Barbers shared tips, debated trends, and laughed together. This camaraderie wasn't just friendly banter; it was a community fostering knowledge sharing

and identity formation. Here, young men weren't just receiving haircuts; they were engaging in a social ritual, shaping their identities through shared experiences and discussions. Barbershops are a community built around the shared interest in fades, fostering a sense of belonging and shared livelihood. The barbershop fosters a unique atmosphere, they facilitate social interaction, knowledge sharing, and identity formation.

Leaving the barbershop, I wasn't just refreshed; I felt connected. My clean fade wasn't just a fashion statement; it was a marker of belonging, a symbol of navigating cultural capital within a globalized world. Witnessing the passion and agency of the barbers, the vibrant community, and the subtle adaptations in styles – all told a little story of agency and cultural exchange.

Indonesian fade haircuts are more than just hairstyles; they're intricate tapestries woven from the threads of cultural capital, fashion, and identity in a rapidly evolving society. They transcend mere aesthetics, becoming powerful markers of belonging, self-expression, and adaptation to a globalized world. Understanding this phenomenon requires us to move beyond simplistic narratives of cultural appropriation and embrace the complex dance between global and local influences.

While some might see fades as mere imitations of Western trends, others perceive them as a form of empowered self-expression within a globalized context. These seemingly contrasting interpretations highlight the agency individuals have in navigating cultural capital through fashion choices. They can choose to embrace international trends as a form of belonging to a broader cultural sphere, or adapt them to express their unique identities within that context.

This nuanced interplay is further amplified by the crucial role of Indonesian barbershops. Indonesian barbershops are more than just haircutting stations; they are cultural hubs shaping fade trends and fostering vibrant communities. Through their role as cultural intermediaries, barbers adapt global trends, and actively participate in the social production of fashion. This

phenomenon offers valuable insights into cultural capital, agency, and the complex interaction between global and local influences in shaping cultural trends.

This synergy between barbers, global trends, and local preferences paints a vibrant picture. Fade haircuts become a testament to the complex and evolving nature of cultural identity in a globalized world, where individuals have the agency to shape their own narratives through fashion choices. They remind us that cultural exchange isn't a one-way street, but rather a symphony of interaction and adaptation.

### Shared Cultural Capital

In the sociological framework, cultural capital refers to the social assets an individual possesses. This section explores the cultural capital necessary for navigating Slotervaart, focusing on language, music, clothing, and hairstyles.

"going to visit his barber for a haircut on a regular basis helped build his identity as a "Black man" and as he got older "it was a necessity" for him to visit his barber." (Clarke et al., 2018)

### Language

Despite their fluency in Dutch, the participants in this study employed a distinctive slang vocabulary that often bordered on a separate dialect. The prevalence of slang within their conversations highlighted its significance as a linguistic marker of belonging and identity. For those unfamiliar with the local slang, comprehending the discussions was challenging, underscoring the secretive and exclusive nature of this linguistic practice.

Subcultural capital is embodied in the form of being 'in the know', such as using current slang (Tolonen, 2007). The slang used was a diverse blend of old Dutch, American, English, Surinamese, profanity, and contemporary slang terms. To remain current with this rapidly evolving lexicon, individuals must actively engage with the urban street culture, interact with peers from the same social scene, or immerse themselves in the world of rap music. Even



with such exposure, fluency in slang can be a subtle indicator of social status and acceptance, potentially leading to inclusion or exclusion within specific social groups.

To give some examples:

<sup>[1]</sup>*Alleen maar chiemangs(kleine jongens in surinaams) van purra (Purmerend) die mat-ties (Surinaams voor vrienden) zijn van Enes* - Robin

<sup>[2]</sup>*Kanes jongen. laatste tijd zit er elke dag ook 1 [grijze] sprietje [in me haar] die gaat van "piew, faka, ik benner" [...] Ja ik weet het kanker man. Aaaarghhhh. Kouwlo ik ben al 25 hé [...] Ik ben al chawa (25 in surinaams) what the hell man* - Randy

<sup>[3]</sup>*Elke meit heeft dezelfde body count (met hoeveel mensen iemand sex heeft gehad). Het is nooit meer dan 8* - Martin

*En hoeveel maanden hebben ze niet gewiept (sex). 3 maanden.* - Chin

<sup>[4]</sup>*Ik ben weer gezet (geregeld) man. Als ik vanavond nakkie (sex heb) komt het door jou* - Wicky

As words are made and spoken in the real world, it is often passed on and reaffirmed in the music these men listen to.

## Music

Music played a central role in shaping and perpetuating the cultural identity of the participants. They shared a common musical taste, primarily rap and R&B, and demonstrated a deep knowledge of sub-genres, artists, and producers. Showing the depth of their knowledge but also the realm they inhabit. They would not be remotely as fluent when talking about rock, pop or classic music. This musical expertise not only reflected their cultural affiliation but also influenced their style and behavior as music perpetuates culture (Blanchard, 1999).

## Fashion: A Visual Expression of Identity

The participants shared a common fashion aesthetic, often referred to as "drip." While individual variations existed, there was a shared cultural dress code rooted in urban street style. As urban fashion is a style born of the street, a ruffian look. This look emerged from poor neighborhoods as opposed to fashion dictated by designers and

formal wear.

The same way people who wear suits know what suits look good and which do not. Or how they have an understanding of how to wear a suit and how it should fit. Many of the respondents in this research have the same eye when looking at tracksuits, sport shoes and leisure wear. This is their niche. Looking comfortable and not homely is a part of the fashion they share.

## Hairstyles: A Cultural Signifier

Hairstyles served as a significant cultural signifier. The participants preferred fades and line-ups, which were often viewed as markers of urban masculinity. These styles, distinct from those favored by the white Dutch population, contributed to their sense of identity and belonging.

## Hair: A marker of cultural difference

They talk about the difference between white Dutch and what they feel as a good haircut, as Yonis says, contouren, sides and neck. They are only interested in a fade and line ups. Which a barber for the white Dutch cares less for. They are more interested in how well someone works with longer lengths and shears.

These men complain about how they cannot see it when someone cuts their hair in these white barber shops. While they can even get mad about people asking them why they are going to the barber again, because they clearly do not feel their hair looking proper. It is often even the case that people who never had short sides do not understand that the hairs on the sides grow out within two weeks, completely covering a fade.

In this piece it becomes clear how much of a cultural gap there is between people who leave their sides longer or white Dutch and the urban community. This also shows how this haircuts brings them together, physically, by looking more like each other and being in the same space. But also in terms of culture and togetherness. As this shows their cultural identity and cultural capital, creating inclusion and exclusion.

### Cultural capitalists

The cultural capital of the participants in this study encompassed language, music, fashion, and hairstyles. These elements not only shaped their individual identities but also facilitated their navigation of the Slotervaart community. By understanding and adopting these cultural markers, individuals could establish social connections, gain acceptance, and participate fully in the community's cultural life.

### Confidence

The difference in confidence they when walking into and out of the barbershop is remarkable. They have a boost in morale, like a miracle medicine. Once out of the chair they walk with their head up, chest out, spring in their step and smiles on their faces.

Most of them come before an event for which they want to look their best. Saying that they sometimes skip small events because they feel they don't look good. Some even go as far as not wanting their hair cut because they do not want to go out too often.

Of course people get their hair cut is to be presentable (in the way they prefer) towards others, however, the first few moments of their hair being cut, the feeling they have seems to be for them.'

The last act of the haircut is my favorite moment. That is when I (the barber) take a small mirror around the back of the client's head to see the sides and back of their haircut, when they see themselves and cannot help but smile.

Rituals have been around for years, although there are not many left where men have made a whole culture out of something so superficial till the point of it feeling like a mental and spiritual cleansing. Reaffirming who they are and want to be.

### CONCLUSION

This article offers a lens through which to understand the cultural significance of hairstyles within this specific community. By applying Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, we challenge the notion that cultu-

ral capital is exclusively associated with elite groups and demonstrate its accessibility within diverse subcultures.

The concept of cultural capital provides valuable insights into: The mechanisms of cultural participation: How individuals navigate and engage within a specific cultural context. The shared nature of culture: Why this is a shared culture, as commonalities and bonds that unite members of a cultural group. The complexities of cultural belonging: The challenges and nuances involved in becoming a part of a particular culture.

Beyond its aesthetic appeal, the fade haircut serves as a powerful marker of belonging, self-expression, and adaptation to a globalized world. This study reveals the various ways in which individuals within this community share cultural capital, forming a cohesive subculture with its own norms, values, language, fashion, interests, and shared experiences of discrimination. Despite their diverse backgrounds, these men have found common ground within this subculture, fostering a sense of sameness and togetherness.

The Double-Edged Sword of Cultural Conformity: While cultural affiliation provides a sense of belonging and strength, it can also impose constraints on individual agency. The norms and values associated with this culture shape expectations for behavior, potentially limiting personal freedom.

Despite these constraints, the culture's appeal lies in its inclusivity. By participating in barbershop rituals, individuals engage in self-care and embark on a journey of self-love and personal growth.

The act of looking in the mirror, often a seemingly mundane task, can be a powerful tool for self-affirmation. This ritual contributes to building self-confidence, which can have positive implications for various aspects of life.

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- [1] Only small boys from Purmerend are friends with Enes- Robin
- [2] God dammit boy. lately there is also 1 [grey] area [in my hair] every day that goes from "piew, faka, Hello i am here[...] Yeah I know cancer man. aaaarghhhh. fuck I'm already 25 hey [...] I'm already chawa (25 in Surinamese) what the hell man - Neville
- [3] Every girl has the same body count (how many people someone has had sex with). It's never more than 8 - Martin
- And how many months have they not had fucked (sex). 3 months. - Chin
- [4] I'm set again (regulated) man. If I have sex (sex) tonight it's because of you - Wicky